

# Boston, Mass.



The Urban Environmental Initiative (UEI) is a pilot program launched in 1995 under the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Region 1, New England, to address environmental and public health problems in urban cities. The UEI facilitates community based environmental protection in targeted cities by taking an active role in listening to community needs and concerns, identifying projects, and providing resources to implement projects that make measurable improvements in public health and the quality of the urban environment.

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*Jon Britt, EPA New England*

#### What Makes Boston Special?

- Boston is a tightly packed, walkable city consisting of 16 neighborhoods.
- UEI focuses on the most economically depressed neighborhoods - Roxbury, North and South Dorchester, Mattapan, East Boston, South Boston and Chinatown.
- In 1990, Boston's multi-racial population totaled 574,283 of which 59.4% white (non-Hispanic); 24.3% African-American; 10.8% Hispanic and 5.4% Asian/Pacific Islander.

#### Why Does Boston Need Special Attention?

- Boston exceeds regulated ozone (smog) levels for many summer days.
- 9.6 acres of open space per 1000 residents.
- Chinatown is the most densely populated of all the neighborhoods, with over 111 residents per acre with 9,608 persons per acre of open space.
- There are numerous vacant lots throughout the city. Dudley Triangle (Roxbury) has over 1000 vacant lots.
- Boston rivers are not yet fishable or swimmable.

#### What Are The Long-Term Goals?

- Improve the quality of life for urban residents in Boston and improve access and viability of the Mystic River Watershed.
- Raise awareness and capacity to address environmental issues in this urban setting.

#### Progress/Goals for the Future

##### What Partnership Progress Has Been Made?

- The City of Boston released "Boston's Indicator of Progress and Sustainability Report".
- The Greater Urban Resource Partnership secured \$1.8 million for urban natural resource projects.
- Alternatives for Community and Environment continues to build community capacity through a number of outreach and technical assistance activities including Neighborhoods Against Urban Pollution, the Greater Boston Environmental Justice Network and the Massachusetts Environmental Justice Network.
- East Boston and Chelsea residents received \$100,000 to identify environmental hazards along Chelsea Creek.
- MA Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Law Enforcement Riverways Program created an Urban Rivers Program.

##### What Are The Actions Planned For 2000?

- Increase and diversify funds to maintain Boston's urban environmental infrastructure.
- Develop criteria to select new target city in Massachusetts while redefining Boston's role.
- Continue to work with community organizations to assess environmental hazards, improve access to river front and increase open space in the Mystic River Watershed and throughout Boston.

# City of Boston



## Who Are The Partners?

UEI Community Partnerships • Alternatives for Community and Environment • Greater Boston Environmental Justice Network • Greater Boston Urban Resource Partnership (GBURP) • Environmental Diversity Forum • Neighborhoods Against Urban Pollution (NAUP) • Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative • Dimmock, Codman Square, South Boston and Bowdoin Street Health Centers • Committee for Boston Public Housing • Coalition to Protect Chinatown • Tellus Institute • National Center for Lead Safe Housing • MA Public Health Association • Roxbury Community College • Boston University, School of Public Health • City of Boston, Office of Sustainable Boston, The Environment Department • MA Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP) • EarthWorks Project • East Boston Recreation, Master Planning, Land Use Advisory Council • STRIVE/Boston Employment Service, Inc. • Environmental League of Massachusetts • Save the Harbor/Save the Bay • The Watershed Institute • University of Boston, Urban Harbors Institute • MA Bays Program • MA Coastal Zone Management Program • Metropolitan Area Planning Council • U.S. Housing and Urban Development • U.S. Department of Agriculture - Natural Resource Conservation Service - Forest Service • Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Program • The Food Project • Second Nature Inc. • New England North East State for Coordinated Air Use Management • Re-Vision House • City Life/Vida Urbana • Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture • City of Boston Environment Department • Massachusetts Department of Fish, Wildlife and Law Enforcement - Riverways Program • Appalachian Mountain Club • Reaching Out to Chelsea Adolescents (ROCA) • Chelsea Creek Action Group (CCAG) • Chelsea Green Space and Recreation Committee • Chelsea Community Connection Coalition • Chelsea Human Service Collaborative



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Note: EPA New England offers businesses and municipalities information and assistance to improve compliance with environmental laws and be better stewards of their local environment. Please call to learn how EPA can help.